

We claim:

1. A wagering system including:

a central game controller and at least one gaming device;

5 said central game controller generating and storing a data encryption key and communicating said data encryption key to said gaming device via a secure communication means;

10 said gaming device generating and sending a wagering request to said central game controller via a communication channel, said request authenticated by said data encryption key; and

said central game controller generating and sending a response, to said wagering request, to said gaming device via said communication channel.

15 2. The system of claim 1 wherein said communication channel is a wireless communication channel.

3. The system of claim 1 wherein said gaming device is plugged into said secure communication means.

20 4. The system of claim 1 wherein said response is authenticated by said data encryption key.

25 5. The system of claim 1 wherein said secure communication means is a wired communication link.

6. The system of claim 1 wherein said gaming device is provided with said data encryption key by the central game controller over said secure communication means while said gaming device is stored in a dispensing kiosk.

7. The system of claim 6 wherein said dispensing kiosk includes a latch for securing said gaming device in said dispensing kiosk, said latch being released upon a predetermined event.

5 8. The system of claim 7 wherein said predetermined event is insertion of monetary consideration into said kiosk.

9. The system of claim 6 wherein said kiosk is responsive to said central game controller.

10 10. The system of claim 6 wherein said central game controller monitors inventory of said gaming devices located inside and outside of said dispensing kiosk.

15 11. The system of claim 6 wherein said central game controller links each said gaming device with an identification of a player removing said gaming device from said dispensing kiosk.

20 12. The system of claim 6 wherein said dispensing kiosk charges a gaming device battery while said gaming device is stored in said dispensing kiosk.

13. The system of claim 6 wherein said dispensing kiosk includes a bill validator for accepting monetary consideration in return for said gaming device.

25 14. The system of claim 6 wherein said dispensing kiosk includes a card reader for reading a player club card.

15. The system of claim 6 wherein said dispensing kiosk includes a currency dispenser for paying a player an account balance.

16. The system of claim 6 wherein said dispensing kiosk includes a printer for printing a sales receipt.

5 17. The system of claim 6 wherein said dispensing kiosk includes a barcode reader for reading barcodes on said sales receipt.

18. The system of claim 1 wherein said central game controller includes a means for generating random numbers.

10 19. The system of claim 18 wherein said gaming device is adapted to play at least one game of a group of games consisting of bingo, poker, blackjack, slots, sports book and horse races in response to said central game controller.

15 20. The system of claim 19 wherein said gaming device is a telephone.

21. The system of claim 19 wherein said gaming device is a personal digital assistant.

20 22. The system of claim 1 wherein said request includes an order to purchase a game card.

23. The system of claim 22 wherein said game card is a bingo card

25 24. The system of claim 1 wherein said secure communications means is by infrared light facilitated by said central game controller and said gaming device each having an infrared communication port.

30 25. The system of claim 1 further including a portable device capable of storing and transmitting data in secure communication with said gaming device.

26. The system of claim 6 wherein said dispensing kiosk maintains an account for at least one user of said gaming device.

27. The system of claim 26 wherein said dispensing kiosk credits said account upon return of said gaming device to said dispenser.

28. The system of claim 26 wherein said dispenser refunds the balance of said account upon return of said gaming device to said dispenser.

29. A wagering method including the following steps:

(a) generating and storing a data encryption key by a central game controller and delivering a copy of said data encryption key to a remote wagering device utilizing a secure delivery procedure;

(b) sending a wagering request by said remote wagering device to said central game controller over a communication channel, said wagering request being authenticated by said data encryption key; and

(c) said central game controller generating and sending a response, to said wagering request, to said remote wagering device via said communication channel.

30. The method of claim 29 wherein said communication channel is a wireless communication channel.

31. The method of claim 29 wherein said gaming device is plugged into said secure communication means.

32. The method of claim 29 wherein said response is authenticated by said data encryption key.

33. The method of claim 29 wherein said secure communication means is a wired communication link.

5 34. The method of claim 29 wherein said gaming device is provided with said data encryption key by the central game controller over said secure communication means while said gaming device is stored in a dispensing kiosk.

10 35. The method of claim 34 wherein said dispensing kiosk includes a latch for securing said gaming device in said dispensing kiosk, said latch being released upon a predetermined event.

36. The method of claim 35 wherein said predetermined event is insertion of monetary consideration into said kiosk.

15 37. The method of claim 34 wherein said kiosk is responsive to said central game controller.

20 38. The method of claim 34 wherein said central game controller monitors inventory of said gaming devices located inside and outside of said dispensing kiosk.

39. The method of claim 34 wherein said central game controller links each said gaming device with identification of a player removing said gaming device from said dispensing kiosk.

25 40. The method of claim 34 wherein said dispensing kiosk charges a gaming device battery while said gaming device is stored in said dispensing kiosk.

30 41. The method of claim 34 wherein said dispensing kiosk includes a bill validator for accepting monetary consideration in return for said gaming device.

42. The method of claim 34 wherein said dispensing kiosk includes a card reader for reading a player club card.

5 43. The method of claim 34 wherein said dispensing kiosk includes a currency dispenser for paying a player an account balance.

44. The method of claim 34 wherein said dispensing kiosk includes a printer for printing a sales receipt.

10 45. The method of claim 34 wherein said dispensing kiosk includes a barcode reader for reading barcodes on said sales receipt.

15 46. The method of claim 29 wherein said central game controller includes a means for generating random numbers.

47. The method of claim 46 wherein said gaming device is adapted to play at least one game from a group of games consisting of bingo, poker, blackjack, slots, sports book and horse races in response to said central game controller.

20 48. The method of claim 47 wherein said gaming device is a telephone.

49. The method of claim 47 wherein said gaming device is a personal digital assistant.

25 50. The method of claim 29 wherein said request includes an order to purchase a game card.

51. The method of claim 50 wherein said game card is a bingo card

52. The method of claim 29 wherein said secure communications means is by infrared light facilitated by said central game controller and said gaming device each having an infrared communication port.

5 53. The method of claim 29 further including a portable device capable of storing and transmitting data in secure communication with said gaming device.

54. The method of claim 34 wherein said dispensing kiosk maintains an account for at least one user of said gaming device.

10 55. The method of claim 54 wherein said dispensing kiosk credits said account upon return of said gaming device to said dispensing kiosk.

15 56. The method of claim 54 wherein said dispenser refunds the balance of said account upon return of said gaming device to said dispensing kiosk.

57. A self-service dispenser for dispensing at least one portable gaming device including:

said dispenser being controlled by a computer;

20 said gaming device receiving data from said computer while being housed in said dispenser; and

said data enabling operation of said portable gaming device following dispensing of said gaming device from said dispenser.

25 58. The dispenser of claim 57 further including a latch for securing said gaming device in said dispenser, said latch being released upon a predetermined event.

30 59. The dispenser of claim 58 wherein said predetermined event is insertion of monetary consideration into said dispenser.

60. The dispenser of claim 57 wherein said dispenser receives from said portable gaming device an identification of said gaming device while said gaming device is housed in said dispenser.

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61. The dispenser of claim 57 wherein said data includes a bingo card.

62. The dispenser of claim 57 wherein said data includes an encryption key.

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63. The dispenser of claim 57 wherein said gaming device includes a transceiver for wireless communication with said computer while being outside of said dispenser.

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64. The dispenser of claim 57 wherein said dispenser charges a gaming device battery while said gaming device is housed in said dispenser.

65. The dispenser of claim 57 wherein said dispenser includes a bill validator for accepting monetary consideration in return for said gaming device.

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66. The dispenser of claim 57 wherein said dispenser includes a card reader for reading a player club card.

67. The dispenser of claim 57 wherein said dispenser includes a printer for printing a sales receipt.

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68. The dispenser of claim 57 wherein said dispenser includes a barcode reader for reading barcodes on said sales receipt.

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69. The dispenser of claim 57 wherein said dispenser maintains an account for at least one user of said gaming device.



70. The dispenser of claim 57 wherein said dispenser credits said account upon return of said gaming device to said dispenser.

5 71. The dispenser of claim 57 wherein said dispenser refunds the balance of said account upon return of said gaming device to said dispenser.